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LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, CA

SUBJECT: CANADIAN DEFENSE STRUCTURE REVIEW - US COMMENTS

REFS: A) USNATO 3471; B)NATO 3472

HOLD FOR OPENING OF BUSINESS

1. WE APPRECIATE MISSION'S FULL REPORTING ON JUNE 26

DISCUSSIONS WITH CANADIANS ON CANADIAN DEFENSE STRUCTURE

REVIEW. WE PARTICULARLY WELCOME REPORT (REFTEL A) OF

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CANADIAN ASSURANCES REGARDING FUTURE CONSULTATIONS WITH US

AND ALLIES ON ALL RELEVANT ASPECTS OF DEFENSE STRUCTURE

REVIEW BEFORE FINAL DECISIONS BY GOC.

2. AS RESULT OF RECENT NATO SUMMIT AND TALKS WITH

CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT, TRUDEAU IS CONVINCED OF IMPORTANCE WHICH CANADIAN FORCES IN EUROPE REPRESENT FOR FUTURE PROSPECTS OF CANADIAN-EC RELATIONSHIP. ALTHOUGH TOTAL AMOUNT OF RESOURCES WHICH GOC WILL BE WILLING TO DEVOTE TO FUTURE DEFENSE SPENDING IS LIMITED, WE BELIEVE THIS IS A FAVORABLE TIME TO ENCOURAGE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT TO BROADEN SIGHTS AND SERIOUSLY AND IMAGINATIVELY CONSIDER MOST EFFECTIVE AND RATIONAL CONTRIBUTION IT SHOULD MAKE TO ALLIANCE OVER NEXT DECADE OR SO. OUR HOPE IS THAT THIS COULD LEAD TO AN IMPROVED NATO CONTRIBUTION, WITHOUT UNSATISFACTORY TRADE-OFFS THROUGH OTHER DEFENSE CURTAILMENTS.

3. WITH ABOVE IN MIND, WE HAVE REVISED DRAFT US RESPONSE AS PROVIDED REFTEL B WITH AIM OF PROVIDING TRUDEAU WITH BEST POSSIBLE RATIONALE TO PERSUADE CANADIAN CABINET OF IMPORTANCE OF CANADA'S NATO CONTRIBUTION. OUR REPLY STRESSES PRELIMINARY NATURE OF OUR COMMENTS AND OUR DESIRE TO CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS WITH GOC AS IT DEVELOPS DEFENSE REVIEW. IN LIGHT OF MARSHALL'S COMMENTS (REFTEL A) THAT FINAL GOC DECISION MAY NOT BE READY FOR ANOTHER YEAR, WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT JUNE 26 TALKS IMPLY FIRST STEP IN DISCUSSION WITH CANADIANS ON THEIR FUTURE NATO COMMITMENTS AS WELL AS BROADER DEFENSE PLANNING, INCLUDING, INTER ALIA, THE MAJOR QUESTION FACING GOC OF EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT FOR LAND, AIR, AND SEA FORCES.

4. MISSION AUTHORIZED TO PROVIDE FOLLOWING US COMMENTS TO CANADIAN DELEGATION.

US COMMENTS ON CANADIAN DEFENSE STRUCTURE REVIEW

(1) THE UNITED STATES CONSIDERS CANADA'S NATO FORCE CONTRIBUTION AS POLITICALLY AND MILITARILY ESSENTIAL TO ALLIANCE DEFENSE. CANADA IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ECONOMIES IN THE WORLD AND THIS COMBINED WITH ITS CRITICAL GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION, GIVE IT A SPECIAL ROLE. THE US, AS THE ONLY OTHER NON-EUROPEAN COUNTRY, PARTICULARLY CONFIDENTIAL

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APPRECIATES CANADA'S ROLE IN NATO. FROM THE EARLY DAYS OF THE ALLIANCE, CANADIAN AND US FORCES IN EUROPE HAVE HELPED PROVE THAT THE FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE FOR NORTH AMERICA BEGINS IN CENTRAL EUROPE. TO OUR EUROPEAN ALLIES, THE PRESENCE OF US AND CANADIAN FORCES HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT BOTH CONTINENTS STAND TOGETHER FIRMLY BEHIND THE ALLIANCE PRINCIPLES OF COMMON DEFENSE AND COLLECTIVE SECURITY. EUROPEAN ALLIES, ESPECIALLY THE FRG, PLACE GREAT STAKE IN THIS COMMITMENT, WHICH IS THE PARAMOUNT EXAMPLE OF TRANS-ATLANTIC SOLIDARITY. THE CONTINUING EFFORT OF THE SOVIET UNION AND THE WARSAW PACT ALLIES TO STRENGTHEN THEIR CONVENTIONAL FORCES CONSTITUTE A POWERFUL ARGUMENT--OF SPECIAL RELEVANCE AT A TIME WHEN THE

PROCESS OF DETENTE IS STILL IN A TESTING STAGE--TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF CANADA'S DEFENSE CONTRIBUTION.

(2) THE US WELCOMES THE RECOGNITION BY THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT OF ITS RESPONSIBILITY TO CONSULT WITH ITS ALLIES, BEFORE FINAL DECISIONS ARE TAKEN, ON THOSE ASPECTS OF ITS DEFENSE REVIEW TOUCHING ON MUTUAL SECURITY COMMITMENTS

WITHIN THE ALLIANCE. WE LOOK UPON THE JUNE 26 DISCUSSIONS IN BRUSSELS WITH THE US DELEGATION TO NATO ON CANADIAN FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE AS AN IMPORTANT FIRST STEP IN THE CONSULTATION PROCESS, AND WE WELCOME AND APPRECIATE CANADIAN ASSURANCES TO US REGARDING FUTURE CONSULTATIONS ON ALL PERTINENT ASPECTS OF ITS DEFENSE REVIEW, INCLUDING THOSE RELATING TO NORTH AMERICA.

(3) GIVEN THE SHORT TIMEFRAME AVAILABLE TO US FOR COMMENTS, THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS PAPER ARE NECESSARILY PRELIMINARY. WE WILL STUDY THE CANADIAN PROPOSALS IN DETAIL AS MORE INFORMATION BECOMES AVAILABLE, AND WOULD WISH AND EXPECT TO CONSULT FURTHER WITH CANADIAN AUTHORITIES IN THE NEAR FUTURE ON THEIR PROPOSALS IN ORDER TO FURNISH MORE SUBSTANTIAL COMMENTS WHICH MIGHT BE OF ASSISTANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA IN PROVIDING THE MOST EFFECTIVE AND RATIONAL CANADIAN CONTRIBUTION TO CENTRAL FRONT FORCES IN NATO.

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(4) CANADA'S STANDING FORCES IN EUROPE ARE A PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF CANADA'S CONTRIBUTION TO ALLIANCE DEFENSE. THEY REPRESENT A VISIBLE DETERRENT FORCE IN PLACE AND SYMBOLIZE CANADA'S TOTAL CONTRIBUTION, WHICH INCLUDES THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF LAND AND AIR REINFORCEMENT FORCES, MARITIME FORCES, AND OTHER FORCES THAT COULD BE USED TO ASSIST IN EUROPEAN DEFENSE SHOULD THE NEED ARISE. IN ADDITION, CANADA PROVIDES FORCES WHICH ARE COMMITTED TO THE DEFENSE OF THE NORTH AMERICAN REGION OF NATO. THEREFORE, THESE COMMENTS SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED IN ANY WAY AS REFLECTING A JUDGMENT THAT FORWARD-BASED FORCES SHOULD NECESSARILY BE STRESSED AT THE EXPENSE OF THE OTHER ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS.

(5) CANADA'S FORWARD-BASED LAND AND AIR FORCES TOGETHER AND INDEPENDENTLY CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO DETERRENCE OF THE WARSAW PACT. CANADIAN LAND FORCES COMPLEMENT THE LAND FORCES OF THE OTHER ALLIES IN THE AREA. AIR FORCES ARE ESSENTIAL TO ROUND OUT THE INTEGRAL NATURE OF THE CANADIAN CONTRIBUTION TO DETERRENCE AGAINST ALL LIKELY FORMS OF ATTACK. CANADA'S LAND AND AIR FORCE CONTINGENTS, THOUGH RELATIVELY MODEST IN SIZE, PROVIDE A SOUND BASE FOR

BUILDING UP BALANCED FORCE LEVELS IN THE EVENT OF RISING TENSION.

(6) THE US ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE PRINCIPLE THAT NATO FORCES SHOULD NOT BE REDUCED EXCEPT IN THE CONTEXT OF A MUTUAL AND BALANCED FORCE REDUCTION AGREEMENT WITH THE EAST. ANY CHANGE IN THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE PRESENT CANADIAN MIXED LAND/AIR FORCES AT THIS TIME WOULD

INEVITABLY LEAD MEMBERS OF THE WARSAW PACT AND CANADA'S ALLIES ALIKE TO ASK WHETHER CANADA'S COMMITMENT TO WESTERN DEFENSES HAD BEEN ALTERED. SUCH CHANGES COULD ALSO SET AN UNFORTUNATE PRECEDENT AND CREATE PRESSURE FOR CHANGES IN THE FORCE STRUCTURES OF OTHER ALLIES, INCLUDING THE US. THUS, ANY CHANGE MUST BE CONSIDERED WITH GREAT CARE AND FULL DELIBERATION.

(7) CHANGES IN ROLES ENVISAGED BY SOME OF THE CANADIAN OPTIONS WOULD REQUIRE HIGHLY DETAILED STUDY. THESE EARLY CONFIDENTIAL

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INDICATIONS OF CANADIAN OPTIONS FOR ITS CENTRAL FRONT FORCES REVEAL INNOVATIVE THINKING ON THE PART OF THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT. THESE OPTIONS MIGHT WELL DEVELOP INTO EXAMPLES OF HOW NATO COUNTRIES CAN BETTER RATIONALIZE, MODERNIZE, AND SPECIALIZE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE ALLIANCE. HOWEVER, UNTIL THE OPTIONS CAN BE FULLY STUDIED, THE US STRONGLY FAVORS CONTINUATION OF THE MIXED LAND/AIR FORCE, MODERNIZED AS NECESSARY, AND AT THE LEAST AN ESSENTIAL INTERIM MEASURE, TO MEET NATO FORCE GOALS FOR CANADA, UNTIL DEFINITIVE DECISIONS CAN BE REACHED AND AGREED UPON IN THE NATO CONTEXT.

(8) THE CONCEPT OF RATIONALIZATION-SPECIALIZATION DESERVES SUSTAINED EXPLORATION FOR COST EFFECTIVENESS, ALTHOUGH THERE IS A LIMIT TO ITS APPLICATION SINCE IT IS IMPORTANT THAT ALL ALLIES SHARE THE BURDEN OF PROVIDING SHOULDER-TO-SHOULDER SOLIDARITY IN FRONT LINE COMBAT COMMITMENT. MOREOVER, ANY CHANGE IN CANADIAN CURRENT GROUND AND AIR CONTRIBUTIONS, ESPECIALLY IF BASED ON THE SPECIALIZATION OF COMBAT ROLES, SHOULD ONLY BE AGREED IN CONNECTION WITH DISCUSSIONS IN THE ALLIANCE AFFECTING THE ROLES OF OTHER ALLIES.

(9) THE CANADIAN MECHANIZED BRIGADE GROUP PROVIDES THE ONLY IN PLACE NATO-COMMITTED RESERVE FOR THE CENTRAL ARMY GROUP (CENTAG). SINCE THE MOST DISADVANTAGEOUS DISPARITY CONFRONTING NATO IS THE WARSAW PACT'S IMPRESSIVE ARMORED SUPERIORITY, THIS CANADIAN RESERVE MUST CONTAIN A FIRST-CLASS TANK FORMATION THAT CAN MOVE RAPIDLY TO MEET A BREAK-THROUGH ANYWHERE ALONG THE ARMY GROUP FRONT. THIS FUNCTION CANNOT BE PERFORMED BY LIGHTER MECHANIZED VEHICLES, AIR-

MOBILE UNITS, OR LIGHT ANTI-ARMOR FORMATIONS.

(10) MOST OF THE "VARIATIONS" IN THE CANADIAN PAPER WOULD INVOLVE FIRST, REDUCING THE NUMBER OF TANKS OR THE NUMBER OF MEN ALONG THE CENTRAL FRONT, OR, SECOND, "SPECIALIZING" IN THE COMMAND AND CONTROL OR MANNING OF TANKS PROVIDED BY OTHERS, PRESUMABLY THE US OR THE FRG. OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS, THE FIRST OF THESE EFFECTS WOULD BE MANI-

FESTLY UNDESIRABLE AND THE SECOND, INsofar AS THE US IS
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CONCERNED, MANIFESTLY IMPRACTICABLE.

(11) IN CONCLUSION, WE BELIEVE THE ONGOING CANADIAN DEFENSE REVIEW PROVIDES THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT WITH A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE NATO DEFENSE POSTURE BY RATIONALIZING CANADA'S COMMITMENTS TO NATO. CANADIAN WILLINGNESS TO CONSULT FULLY WITH HER NATO ALLIES AS THE DEFENSE REVIEW TAKES SHAPE, IS NOT ONLY AN ESSENTIAL STEP IN MEETING PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU'S GOAL TO "MAKE SURE THAT CANADIAN PARTICIPATION IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE POSSIBLE," BUT IS ALSO A SIGNIFICANT CONTRI-BUTION TO THE VITAL PROCESS OF COMBINED PLANNING IN KEEPING NATO'S DEFENSES STRONG AND FLEXIBLE. AS THE CANADIAN REVIEW PROGRESSES AND COSTING AND OTHER DATA ARE DEVELOPED FOR THE VARIOUS OPTIONS CONSIDERED, WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING TO PROVIDE OUR VIEWS AND TO WORKING CLOSELY WITHIN NATO WITH CANADIAN AUTHORITIES. INGERSOLL

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